

*Administration of Barack H. Obama, 2009*

**Letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives Transmitting a Supplemental Appropriations Request for Ongoing Military, Diplomatic, and Intelligence Operations**

*April 9, 2009*

*Dear Madam Speaker:*

We face a security situation in Afghanistan and Pakistan that demands urgent attention. The Taliban is resurgent and al Qaeda threatens America from its safe haven along the Afghan-Pakistan border.

With that reality as my focus, today I send to the Congress a supplemental appropriations request totaling \$83.4 billion that will fund our ongoing military, diplomatic, and intelligence operations. Nearly 95 percent of these funds will be used to support our men and women in uniform as they help the people of Iraq to take responsibility for their own future—and work to disrupt, dismantle, and defeat al Qaeda in Pakistan and Afghanistan. The rest of the money will fund a variety of defense and international efforts that will help to use all the elements of our power to confront the threats to our security—from securing loose nuclear weapons to combating fear and want under repressive regimes.

In the past, the Congress has moved expeditiously to approve funding for our Armed Forces. I urge the Congress to do so once more. I also urge the Congress to focus on the needs of our troops and our national security, and not to use the supplemental to pursue unnecessary spending. I want the Congress to send me a focused bill, and to do so quickly. When this request returns to me as legislation ready to be signed, it should remain focused on our security. It is important that we follow the same approach we applied to the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and keep extraneous and unnecessary projects out of this legislation.

As I noted when first I introduced my budget in February, this is the last planned war supplemental. Since September 2001, the Congress has passed 17 separate emergency funding bills totaling \$822.1 billion for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. After 7 years of war, the American people deserve an honest accounting of the cost of our involvement in our ongoing military operations.

We must break that recent tradition and include future military costs in the regular budget so that we have an honest, more accurate, and fiscally responsible estimate of Federal spending. And we should not label military costs as emergency funds so as to avoid our responsibility to abide by the spending limitations set forth by the Congress. After years of budget gimmicks and wasteful spending, it is time to end the era of irresponsibility in Washington. In this request, we are honest about the costs we will bear as a Nation, and we will use our resources wisely and responsibly to meet the threats of our time and keep our Nation safe and secure.

There is no question of the resolve of our military women and men. Yet, in Afghanistan, that resolve has not been matched by a comprehensive strategy and sufficient resources. This funding request will ensure that the full force of the United States—our military, intelligence, diplomatic, and economic power—are engaged in an overall effort to defeat al Qaeda and uproot the safe haven from which it plans and trains for attacks on the homeland and on our

allies. At the same time that we are increasing our troop commitment, we will employ the necessary civilian resources to build Afghan governance capacity and self-sufficiency.

As the United States moves forward with our mission, we are asking our friends and allies to join us with a renewed commitment. As I made clear on my recent trip to Europe, the threat posed by al Qaeda is international in scope; the response to the threat also should be international. Going forward with this strategy, we will establish and regularly assess military and civilian capacity, checking progress through clear measurements to ensure an ongoing informed assessment and accountability. I have asked my National Security Advisor, General Jim Jones, to oversee this effort and to work with the Congress on the development of these standards for progress.

In Iraq, violence has been reduced substantially because of the skilled efforts of our troops and the Iraqi people's commitment to peace. The threat of terrorism in Iraq has been dealt a serious blow. Iraqis are prepared to take responsibility for their own future through a peaceful political process. Because of this, we are positioned to move forward with a responsible drawdown of our combat forces, transferring security to Iraq's forces. Under the Strategic Framework Agreement and Security Agreement, Iraqi personnel have taken the lead in security operations and will continue to handle greater responsibility.

Stability and security depend on responsive, capable, and accountable governments. This request includes funds to help create political and economic stability in post-conflict areas, assist Afghans and Iraqis to protect and sustain their infrastructure, and build their capacity for more responsive and transparent governance. This request also will enable military commanders to respond to urgent humanitarian relief and reconstruction needs in their areas of responsibility. We provide funds for the extraordinary security and costs associated with supporting U.S. diplomatic activity in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan.

The request also increases funding to provide wounded servicemembers with the highest quality support and care, and provides additional compensation to our troops for their service in hazardous, life-threatening areas.

This request reflects the reality of our day and age: We need to use all the elements of our power—economic and diplomatic as well as military—to confront threats to our security.

Thank you for your consideration of this funding request and for your steadfast support for our servicemembers and their families.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

*Categories:* Communications to Congress : Military, diplomatic, and intelligence operations, ongoing, letter transmitting supplemental appropriations request.

*Names:* Jones, James L., Jr.

*Subjects:* Afghanistan : Democracy efforts ; Afghanistan : NATO, role; Afghanistan : Reconstruction and infrastructure development; Afghanistan : U.S. military forces :: Deployment; Armed Forces, U.S. : Funding; Arms and munitions : Nuclear weapons and material :: Security; Budget, Federal : Accountability and transparency; Budget, Federal : Fiscal year 2010 budget; Economy, national : American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009; Iraq : Democracy efforts; Iraq : Infrastructure and economic development; Iraq : Iraqi military and security forces; Iraq : Reconciliation efforts; Iraq : Status of Forces Agreement

with U.S.; Iraq : Strategic Framework Agreement with U.S.; Iraq : U.S. military forces ::  
Deployment; Pakistan : Federally Administered Tribal Areas, suspected terrorist safe havens;  
Terrorism : Al Qaida terrorist group; Terrorism : Global threat; Veterans : Benefits; Veterans :  
Health care; White House Office : Assistants to the President :: National Security Adviser.

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